Sir Edward Carson also decided to come into the Government once more. It was my original intention to make him a Member of the War Cabinet. He had no administrative experience and I thought that his great talents could be better utilised in a consultative than in an executive position. Conservative Ministers, however, resented his promotion to the Cabinet that directed the War, and I had reluctantly to give way. It was a mistake. He had no aptitude for administrative office, but his keen mind would have been helpful in Council.

The refusal of Liberal Ministers to join the Government enabled me to make an experiment which turned out to be a conspicuous success. I invited from outside a number of men of exceptional capacity who had never held any office in any Government and most of whom were not even in Parliament, to occupy positions of great responsibility. I also decided to place men of this type in charge of some of the new Departments. Shipping was such a vital service for the conduct and continuance of the War that I felt there ought to be a separate Department dealing with it, and that some person experienced in ship management should be put in charge. The very life of the nation depended upon making the best use of our ships—in the transport of food and material from overseas and in the carriage

Appointment

of munitions and men for the various war areas. Had there been a serious breakdown in British shipping the Allies would have been beaten. Our shipping resources were developing a grave deficiency. I therefore decided that a new Ministry should be created whose exclusive function should be their complete re-organisation. I invited a great Glasgow shipowner—